

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1 and 4-19 (Previously Cancelled)

Claims 2, 3 and 20-32 (Cancelled)

33. (New) A skin cosmetic composition comprising:

hydrogel particles dispersed in an aqueous medium, wherein each of said hydrogel particles comprises a non-crosslinked hydrogel having an oil component dispersed therein, wherein said hydrogel particles are prepared by a process comprising:

providing an emulsion or dispersion of components comprising a non-crosslinked hydrogel-forming polymer, the oil component and water; and

discharging said emulsion or dispersion through an orifice under conditions sufficient to provide droplets, which are cooled after formation.

34. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein said discharging step is performed simultaneously with application of vibrations.

35. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 34, wherein said application of vibrations is performed by a member selected from the group consisting of applying vibration to said orifice, applying vibration directly to said emulsion or dispersion, and applying vibration to a liquid column into which said emulsion or dispersion is being discharged.

36. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 34, wherein said vibrations are at a frequency of from 1 to 2000 Hz.

37. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein said orifice has a diameter of from 0.1 to 5 mm.

38. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein said emulsion or dispersion is at a temperature above the gelation temperature prior to discharging through said orifice and is cooled to below said gelation temperature thereafter.

39. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein said droplets have a shape having rotation symmetry.

40. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 39, wherein said droplets are spherical.

41. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein said emulsion or dispersion further comprises an emulsifying agent or a dispersing agent.

42. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein the non-crosslinked hydrogel is made of agar or gelatin.

43. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 41, wherein the emulsifying agent or dispersing agent comprises a polymer emulsifying or dispersing agent.

44. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein the oil component comprises a solid fat, and the melting point of the oil component is not less than 35° C.

45. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein the oil component comprises a solid ceramide or an analog thereof.

46. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein not less than 80% by weight of the hydrogel particles have a ratio of a longest diameter to a shortest diameter (longest diameter/shortest diameter) of not more than 1.7.

47. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein the hydrogel particle has a breaking intensity of 2 to 40kPa and a Young's modulus of 10 to 150 kPa.

48. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein the non-crosslinked hydrogel is made of agar having a gel strength of not more than 68.6 kPa.

49. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein the skin cosmetic composition is a lotion.

50. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 33, wherein said droplets are substantially monodisperse in size.